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This document aims at providing a framework for describing the community development educator's role, functions, and environment. The text includes discussion of some human factors which are found in all communities and which influence decision making. Attention is directed also to the educator's performance and practices, as well as to techniques that are likely to be useful to him. Finally, an attempt is made to differentiate between extension and community development education. An annotated bibliography identifies some concepts and some sources of information. (nl)

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Reflections

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on

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

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1 EDUCATOR OR REVOLUTIONIST?

This is written as a guide for the individual who is concerned with influencing the ways in which people take group action to get what they want. I have attempted to analyze the approach that has been effective for me in helping various kinds of communities to experience learning which improves their chances for reaching their goals. Out of such analysis has emerged a pattern of values, attitudes and procedures that can provide a base of confidence for the community development educator.

The terms "community development," "resource development," "community resource development," "community organization," "organization development" and others are used to describe a variety of processes and situations that deal with the action of people in groups to bring about change. An equally long list can be made of the roles that are performed by individuals who attempt to influence these processes and situations whether as educators, developers, activists, persuaders or revolutionists. It seems of little value here to investigate and define all of the meanings of these terms. Instead, the undertaking is to describe one way of influencing one type of group action. This does not imply that other approaches are less useful or desirable in some circumstances.

The purpose of this presentation is to provide a framework for describing the community development educator's role, functions and environment. It is not intended to offer a procedural formula, but rather to serve as a guide to help the individual develop his effectiveness.

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Who Is A Community Development Educator?

No single label identifies the reader for whom this is presented. I call him a "community development educator". Perhaps he can best be characterized by his interest in applying the educational process to a variety of subjects within any of a number of broadly defined community groups. Such individuals are found working under an assortment of titles in the Cooperative Extension Service, in community action agencies, in some government planning offices, in some social science departments of universities, and in a growing number of private consulting firms. They are more interested in helping people resolve their problems than in promoting adoption of a specific technology.

The community development educator faces a variety of special problems. Most of these spring from the relative newness of the role of community development educator and the ambiguity about everything related to it. He has no clear source of identity, to wit, the absence of even a label that is generally recognized. He can turn to no single discipline for the subject matter related to his job. He has relatively few colleagues to whom he can turn for understanding and support.

Little is known about the nature of community development educators, so he may be variously neglected and abused, or rewarded and glorified by his superiors. Since his client organizations and their problems are complex, he performs a number of different actions at various times and may be seen by his clients and supervisors alike as a bewildering, unstable, unknown quantity.

He is caught up among conflicting forces most of the time. He may derive satisfaction from the dependence upon him of influential people in substantial organizations, yet his ultimate success depends upon his avoiding such dependence. With rare exceptions the community development educator did not plan to be one. He was recruited either voluntarily or by institutional edict from some other vocation. If he volunteered because of interest, he is hungry for learning to improve his performance. If drafted, he may resist education.

Results in the form of changed behavior in organized action usually can be accomplished only in a long-term situation. However, the performance of a community development educator often is evaluated on a short-term basis.

The vocation of community development educator is lonely and hard, frustrating and uneasy; it also can be rewarding, satisfying and self-fulfilling.

Purpose: Analysis and Reinforcement

The purpose of this presentation is to offer support to the community development educator through analysis of his work situation, who he is, and what he does with the intent of improving his performance. It also is intended to help him cope with some of the problems he encounters by identifying their source and nature. It may be helpful to others who are interested in understanding this type of educator.

This text is intended as a basis for the community development educator to:

1. increase his understanding of the elements of community development.
2. assess systematically the strengths and weaknesses of a community development situation.
3. examine one approach to community development education and the principles from which it grew.
4. gain confidence in his ability to practice community development education.

Assumptions About Community Development Education

This book is based upon certain assumptions:

1. That community development is the organized action of groups of people to bring about social and economic change.
2. That community development is group behavior that can be learned.
3. That thoughtful study of the community development process by the group in which it occurs can lead to improving its effectiveness.

The values, perceptions and principles from which these assumptions grow are examined and a suggested course of action is identified. Therefore the validity of the conceptual framework depends upon acceptance of these assumptions. If you cannot accept the assumptions, then read no further. If you can accept the assumptions you need constantly to remind yourself that what is presented is built upon them.

Two concepts of social action are closely related to, but different from, community development, or at least different from community development education. The social action process described by Beal, Bohlen and Raudabaugh, and the problem-solving process described by Dewey, Osborne, Kepner-Tregoe and several others are generally objective descriptions of how individuals or groups deal with their problems.

Community development education differs from these by injecting values of democratic action and of collaborative strategies into the process.

Concepts and Perspective

The concepts apply to any definition of community that you may choose. "Community" may be used in the sense of a geographical area, such as a town, or it may mean a group of people in a profession. It often refers to a community that includes several groups among which there are interactions. Because of limitations on the educator's time, interest, competence, and opportunity he must set boundaries through his definition of the communities in which he will work. Setting limits is a personal decision, however, and does not affect the procedures and principles set forth here. Neither is the end goal of the community a basic concern to the educator except as it may relate to his personal interests. He is concerned with the way in which the community goes about problem-solving, decision-making and implementing action. The end of that action is not, in itself, of concern. That is a distinguishing characteristic of this particular style of community development educator—he has no predetermined goal for action of the community.

Significantly, community development education is not simply education *for* action, but education *in* action. The educational activities are carried on within the living operation of the community organization. It is education not merely based on the needs of the people who participate, but it is education that grows out of and is intermingled with the action of the learners.

The text includes discussion of some human factors found in all communities that influence how decisions are made. The decision-making, problem-solving structure and process that exist in a community also are examined. Finally, the role of the educator, his performance and practices are examined. Some attention is

given to techniques that are likely to be useful to the community development educator. An annotated bibliography identifies some sources of information and concepts.

Reference is made to the Cooperative Extension Service because it is a major organization attempting to establish the practice of community development education. The question of difference between community development education and extension education often is debated in extension circles. The distinction may be clarified when measured by this definition of community development: "Community development" is organized action of groups of people to bring about social and economic change. "Community development education" is the providing of learning experiences to increase the effectiveness of that action. "Extension education" is a more inclusive term that applies not only to community development but also to individual behavioral change.

Extension education may involve some degree of persuasion toward a specific course of action or technical information-giving. Community development education of the style referred to here is not based on a predetermined course of action to which students are persuaded. Information-giving is not an important function in this approach. While information may be given, such as on techniques of learning or sources of technology, it is incidental. The primary objective of community development education is *change* in the *process* by which the community takes action.

The main differences between extension and community development education are that the latter is directed at group problem-solving that affects the total community and attempts to influence the way in which problems are handled rather than adoption of a particular solution. The community development educator can easily tend toward persuasion. If he does, he is more properly described as a community developer or organizer.

2 HUMAN FACTORS INFLUENCING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Organized action of groups of people to bring about change is colored by the same strengths and weaknesses, wisdom and stupidity, knowledge and ignorance that characterize most human efforts. Too many planning activities and government agency programs seem to ignore this and proceed as though social and economic problems can somehow be solved through logical reasoning alone. The complex collection of attitudes, values and perceptions possessed by the members of a community determines the way in which decisions are made and acted upon. The community development educator can see more clearly what kind of problems he faces if he looks in advance at some of those human factors which determine how decisions are made, actions taken, and how change influencing those processes may be caused.

General Attitudes, Values and Perceptions of the Community

It is a fallacy to think that decision-making inevitably is a logical, rational process devoid of emotion. Some people may believe that "good" decisions are made on a purely rational basis. A computer produces results strictly from the facts fed into it. Man generally does not. His decisions are influenced by his values, prejudices and perceptions as well as by facts. If rationality were

the only requirement in decision-making, then technical analysis of problems would lead directly and unfailingly to action.

The experienced community worker is aware of numerous economic feasibility analyses which make clear recommendations for courses of action that never have been implemented. A current public issue is pollution control. Technology is readily available for control of much existing pollution but is not used because the attitudes, perceptions and prejudices of people hinder implementation.

Problem-solving processes in communities often are ineffective because participants fail to recognize emotional factors as elements that must be considered along with material data in arriving at decisions.

A major obstacle in community problem-solving is what people believe to be the habitual pattern by which decisions are made. An example of this is the common belief that town officials or other recognized authorities control decision-making in the community. People often say that they are powerless to cause action because recognized authorities will not act. This is compounded by the fact that many office-holders share that belief. While the formally organized leadership in a community is a powerful and significant element in decision-making, it is only part of the total community problem-solving system. The feeling of powerlessness to influence action, not the actual lack of power, is an important obstacle to community action.

A related notion is that action is caused mainly through acquiring power to enforce the action desired. Thus it is common to try to legislate change. If free-running dogs are a nuisance in the community the usual approach is to attempt to pass a leashing ordinance. If teenagers cause disturbances on the streets at night, the approach is to establish a curfew. Public issues usually end with two opposing factions competing for a course of action. The issue is finally resolved when one faction defeats the other. The nature of some issues does result in completely opposing interests; in such cases this type of win-lose confrontation may be unavoidable. We force more two-sided conflicts than are necessary, however. What appear initially to be conflicting points of view tend to harden and become isolated, with little or no investigation by interested parties to identify common ground for working together on resolving problems.

Action Is Shaped by Attitudes, Values, Perceptions

Each of us acts in a particular way in a given situation depending upon our collection of attitudes, values and perceptions. Even for an individual, these attitudes, values and perceptions are complex and difficult to identify. For any group of individuals, the total mass of variant feelings that determine action is awesomely complicated. This is no reason, however, to avoid attempting to analyze values, attitudes and perceptions that lead to the action being taken.

An example of action shaped by perspective is the difference in maintenance of boats by a lobsterman and a sportsman. The lobsterman sees his boat as income-producing equipment upon which his life and livelihood depend. He tends to care for it with the least expenditure of time and effort to achieve the highest degree of efficiency and reliability. The sportsman looks at his boat as a source of pleasure and is likely to be more attentive to comforts, gadgets and cleanliness than to operational efficiency.

An illustration of the effect of perception that has meaning for the community development educator is seen in the contrasting ways in which people perceive "problems." For some, to have a problem is a bad thing, a sign of incompetence, an indication of trouble that should not exist. With this point of view toward problems, individuals tend to evade them, to deny their presence, to feel discomfort when a problem persists, and to judge negatively those who have problems. For others, a problem is a situation that would be desirable to change, is neither good nor bad, and is something that exists. Those who perceive problems in this latter light admit their presence, accept them, use them as a basis for planning, and know that as soon as one is resolved it is replaced by another.

Motivation Spurs to Action

Motivation occurs from drives that cause a person to act. This goad to action comes from within the individual. We talk about "motivating" someone to take action, usually in a direction that we want him to move. We talk of "motivating" people to take responsibility in the community. We speak as though we need to drive people to act.

Related to this perception of motivation is the frequently voiced complaint that people are apathetic or complacent. They won't do anything. They lack motivation. Inaction or non-partici-

pation rarely is the result of people lacking motivation. In most cases, either the issue in question is not truly a concern of those who are inactive, or no acceptable means of participation is available to them. It is doubtful that a community or group lacks motivation to act on *their* problems.

It is more useful for the community development educator to look upon motivation as a key to unlock the drives to action that already exist. This may sound like a subtle distinction, but it is significant. The educator behaves in one manner when he honestly searches for the motivation that exists within people in order to release the obstacles to their taking action. He behaves quite differently when he attempts to find ways to increase pressure on people to act.

Motivation arises from needs within the individual that he must satisfy. These needs are arranged in order of precedence. The first order of needs are physical in nature and take precedent over social or self-fulfilling needs. If the individual is hungry his motivation is to take action that he expects will satisfy his hunger. He is less interested in satisfying his creative needs.

The next order of needs beyond immediate physical requirements is closely related and falls in the category of security. That is, the individual is motivated not only to satisfy his hunger right now but attempts to take action that will insure against his being hungry tomorrow or the next day.

At the other end of the individual's needs are those that can be described as self-fulfilling or self-actualizing. Within the self-fulfilling class of motivation are needs for achievement, for power, for affection and for combinations of these. Probably all of these needs exist to some degree within an individual but at any point in time one particular kind of motivation is likely to be strongest. An individual with a toothache is not likely to be driven to action by a desire for aesthetic satisfaction. It may require most of the energies of an individual to satisfy his hunger needs, leaving little source of motivation for such things as adult education.

The community development educator must recognize that different individuals are motivated by different needs and that a single individual is motivated by different needs at different times. The last speaker on a conference agenda who feels bound to deliver his hour-long speech at 11:45 a.m. when noon is the posted time for lunch would do well to consider this fact.

For a person to handle the variety of experiences that confront him he must classify and shortcut thinking about recurring situations. He stereotypes classes of people and their behavior. While this is useful and necessary for the maintenance of sanity it also leads to many of the problems that arise in group action. An individual reacts to a corporation president according to his stereotype of what corporation presidents are like. This frequently results in a completely inappropriate reaction to a corporation president who is very unlike the stereotype.

Values Affect Action

Closely related to sources of motivation; in fact, one way of looking at some kinds of motivation is to examine democratic values that are widely held. Even when people's basic physical needs are barely being met, one of the most powerful needs affecting them is that for self-esteem or dignity. People resist being manipulated. They struggle against having their situation determined by others and against being pushed around. They struggle against being laughed at or not appreciated, against being forced or exploited. Individuals seek to control their own fate. People try to be active rather than passive. A person has a powerful desire to be able to plan and carry out and succeed in action that he determines. Being prevented from controlling one's own fate leads to frustration that may be expressed by violent destructive or self-destructive activity.

Democratic Values

It is difficult to talk about democracy or democratic values because of the previously mentioned tendency of people to shortcut thinking and to stereotype. The most autocratic leader may express philosophic support of democracy. Democracy is seen as some kind of good, desirable, vague, total participation of people in government. Democratic group action is a term that may raise images of a town meeting-like situation where everyone votes on all issues. In the context of community development it is more useful to look at democratic group participation as the degree to which people have an opportunity to influence decisions that affect them. This is not to say that all participation is equal or alike. The nature and level of involvement proper for an individual is determined by the kind of issue, the data needed for decision, and the source of data.

Some values of democratic group action are basic to community development education and arise directly from the needs for self-esteem. Their relevance to the practice of community development education in societies other than our own warrants further examination. The following points are derived from Franklyn S. Haiman's book, *Group Leadership and Democratic Action.*

1. The method of making social decisions is as important as the decisions themselves. Many of the ego and self-fulfilling needs of people are met by participating in the process of decision-making rather than having decisions made for them.
2. The situations that people fully understand are those they experience themselves. The ideas they fully grasp are ideas they help develop.
3. Decisions that grow out of a group's own struggles are supported more solidly and longer than decisions that are made *for* the group. Exactly the same decisions may be made by an autocratic leader for the group or made by the group through democratic participation. Decisions made by the group will be fully supported, while decisions made by an individual for the group will receive less than full support.
4. Discontent with group decisions can be freely expressed in democratic groups even though the discontented have to abide by the decision. When decisions are imposed the discontented are ingenious in finding ways to evade and circumvent them.
5. Group unity is solid and useful only when it has been hammered out through diversity of interest and opinion under the ever-changing pressure of individual differences.
6. Democratic group action broadens the base of responsibility and self-reliance so the group does not fall apart when a leader is lost.
7. Democratic action enables use of all of the resources of the individuals participating rather than relying upon a few.

Attitudes, Values, Perceptions Can Be Changed

By the definition used here, community development is organized action to bring about social and economic *change*. This means that individuals must change attitudes, values, perceptions

and behavior. These can be changed because they are learned. Since they are created through learning they can be changed by providing learning experiences. This is a job of the community development educator—to provide learning experiences that will change selected attitudes and behavior. The successful educator must be a serious student of the attitudes and value systems of his clientele.

One major obstacle to community development is the abstract and complex nature of most social and economic issues. For example, the seemingly simple issue of establishing a new state park has far-reaching consequences beyond the superficial question of whether the park is desirable. It raises such questions as:

Who will benefit by a park?

Who will be injured by the park?

Who will be directly affected?

What will be the effect on the community tax base?

What will be the results in terms of cost to the state?

How will this affect the tax structure in the state?

What effect will this have on economic enterprise in the vicinity of the park?

What will be the economic effect on a wider regional or state basis?

How are questions answered by economic analysis when the end result is non-economic?

What philosophical issues are involved in the state acquiring property by right of eminent domain?

How can the people who will be affected by the decision be provided an opportunity to understand all the related issues and consequences and participate effectively in making the decision?

The very abstraction and complexity of social issues require that democratic participation be provided for; the total resources of the largest possible number of people are required to deal adequately with such complexity. It is beyond the capacity of a single individual or a few individuals to cope satisfactorily with such complex issues as are found in environmental planning and management, education, government, welfare and the other services expected in communities.

Attitudes, Values and Perceptions of the Educator

The educator is influenced in his actions by the same kinds of attitudes, values and perceptions that affect any human being. Some differences apply, however. For one thing, the community development educator must develop understanding of his own attitudes and values and their effect on his actions. It is easy for the educator to make the incorrect assumption that he can develop some kind of pure objectivity so that he suppresses his feelings and operates unhampered by the usual complex of attitudes, values and perceptions. This is not only impossible but undesirable. It *is* desirable and essential for effectiveness that the educator understand his own attitudes and how they influence his actions and indirectly the response of others.

Some attitudes and values are peculiarly required in the community development educator and can be cultivated. One value system is related to democratic group participation. The community development educator's performance is based upon his belief in the democratic values previously outlined. Of course he need not accept this particular expression of values.

He cannot function effectively in this approach to community development education if he believes that there is a leadership elite, that people are incapable of making their own decisions, that people are unconcerned with their fate and would prefer to be told what to do.

The educator must:

1. operate with the conviction that people do have motivation to act and that his function is to find ways to release the capacity of people to take action.
2. operate on the assumption that all individuals have a powerful need for maintaining their dignity and that they can act intelligently to meet this need. The educator can not function adequately if he sees himself doing things to people or inducing them to do something for themselves.
3. approach his job with an attitude of searching for ways to free people from obstacles that they perceive so that they can move forward.

Closely related to this attitude is the educator's understanding and acceptance of his function as helping others accomplish something. This contrasts with the attitude of the educator in other kinds of situations where he has knowledge, expertise, or other authority that he attempts to persuade his clientele to adopt. Many com-

munity development educators come from a background of giving technical information or advice. This is the stereotyped role of the expert, of the authority. The community development educator's authority derives from his ability to help the client follow a process.

Upon first exposure to the notion, it is difficult for an individual to perceive the difference between the giver-of-information and the helper-to-solve-problems. It is particularly difficult to make the distinction because an educator rarely acts purely as a helping individual or purely as an information giver. It can only be said that most of his action is of one type or the other. Even after recognizing the distinction between being the expert and being the helping individual, it is not easy to develop the skills required to be helpful to others in removing their obstacles to action.

As an individual, the community development educator derives satisfaction from being seen as an expert, from having answers to give, from offering solutions to problems. It is a constant battle to overcome the tendency to offer solutions to problems rather than to help the problem-holder to undertake a more useful process for dealing with his own problems. This is especially hard because the client community organization usually goes through a period of insisting that the community development educator give answers.

The temptation to bend to this pressure is powerful. Solution-giving offers an opportunity to be seen as an expert (and incidentally to get one's own solution adopted). But withholding the solution brings disapproval and often hostility from the client group. It is only through knowledge of his own attitudes and ability to predict the effect on the client group that the community development educator gains strength to hold a course of action that he knows will result in an improved decision-making process in the long run.

Some of the loneliness of the community development educator stems from this general lack of understanding of the difference between information-giving and helping functions. At certain early stages the client expresses dissatisfaction with the educator's unwillingness to give solutions. The client's dissatisfaction may be sufficiently strong that pressure is put on the educator's superior to bring him into line. If the educator's superior does not understand this characteristic of community development education, he in turn may pressure the educator. With hostile action being taken both by the people with whom the educator is working and by his employer he can experience a high degree of anxiety.

This may discourage some potential community development educators and lead them to other safer but less rewarding styles of community development work.

Attitudes and Values of the Client Community

Although the educator often is referred to as working with the "community", he obviously does not work with the entire membership of the community. He interacts with or has a working relationship with sub-groups within the community. It may help to refer to those people with whom the educator has a working relationship as the client. The client's attitude toward the educator is important. It affects the way the educator acts. How to discover and understand the client's attitude is a skill that must be acquired. Basically, the educator acquires the skill by sharpening his ability to listen and observe.

Some of the client's attitudes toward the community development educator are predictable. One such attitude is expressed early in the contact between educator and potential client: suspicion by the client of the educator's motives. The educator tries in various ways to communicate his style of operation; namely, to help the community improve its problem-solving process but with no predetermined bias on what decisions are to be made. This message may be received by the client, but it will not be believed. It is not usual behavior for an educator to attempt to help individuals do whatever they want to do without persuading toward a specific course of action. Only as the educator behaves in a manner that proves his sincerity will the client understand and believe.

After suspicion of the educator's motives abates, another expression of hostility, usually more powerful, comes from the client. This is a phase of resistance by the group to accepting responsibility for its own learning. Examining its own procedures and actions is an upsetting experience for any group, and the group tends to resist that form of learning. It is more traditional and much more comfortable for the "teacher" to tell the group what they should do because this protects the learner from undertaking full responsibility for his learning. With the teacher telling, the learner can find an infinite variety of reasons why he cannot, should not, or will not undertake the prescribed learning. The manner in which the educator responds to this resistance to accepting responsibility for learning is important to the relationship that develops. If he bends to the pressure and tells the group what he thinks should be

done and how to do it, his effectiveness as a consultant is lost, although he can still work as an organizer. If he is patient and understanding, the client eventually becomes self-sufficient and capable of using the educator as a resource person.

Following acceptance by the client of responsibility for learning he tends to become over-enthusiastic about the values of attention to group process. This feeling about the results of learning is directed to the educator for the kind of help that the client sees as extremely useful. Again the response of the educator to this attitude is crucial to his future relationship. In a way, it is a more difficult attitude to handle than the hostility experienced earlier. The educator derives satisfaction from the client's dependence upon him. It is rewarding to know that significant individuals in the community find the educator an important influence. Removing dependence requires positive effort. The educator's aim should be to work himself out of a job in the community. That is, if the educator's effort is successful the community will become self-sustaining, capable of continuing examination of its own processes and of improving them. In practice, of course, communities do not develop to the utmost degree any such capacity for self-renewal. It is thus relatively easy for the educator to rationalize indefinite continuation of his relationship with the community. Suffice it to say that the educator must recognize this situation and arrive at his own means for determining the proper phasing-out and termination points.

Community development education is not simply a matter of studying, identifying and understanding attitudes. However, the educator can not function effectively without some study and understanding of attitudes. He must examine and understand attitudes at the beginning and during his entire sojourn in the community. Such understanding is essential to the design of effective learning activities.

3 THE PRACTICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

At first thought, it may seem logical to separate the elements and factors in the process of community development, the structure within which it takes place in the community, the role of the community development educator and the functions of the educator. However, the significance of these elements is in the relationship among them. Apparently it is impossible to describe the elements in the perspective of the relationship without somehow describing the practice of community development education as it unfolds rather than in separated segments. A sequential pattern of events or phases does take place with each community client.

The following is an overview of the educator's action with his client. It might also be described as the pattern of the educator's functions in the community.

1. Initial contact—developing acquaintance, establishing a basis for proceeding.
2. Task definition—diagnosis of initial problem statement, clarification of task to be undertaken.
3. Contract negotiation—further definition of task, establishing expectations of performance of both educator and client.
4. Educational program design—planning specific learning activities, mobilizing resources, implementing and evaluating.

The practice of community development education is presented here in the somewhat complicated and overlapping manner in which it is experienced in the community. Even this approach fails to transmit the repetitious nature of the phases. That is, contract negotiation occurs not just once but repeatedly throughout the

period of contact of the educator with the community. Evaluation takes place not only at the end of the community development education process but continually from beginning to end. Furthermore, the sequence of educator-client interaction occurs not in isolation, but mingled through the continuous problem-solving activity of the community.

Initial Contact — Where to Begin?

How does the community development educator begin to work with a community? It probably makes little difference how the educator selects the client communities with which he will work. It *is* desirable for him to be aware of the criteria by which he chooses them. His manner of entry will be different if he chooses to work with communities that request his services than if he works with communities that are not aware of having a problem or any need for education. In the latter situation the educator must first create awareness in the community that its problem-solving procedures can be improved. Enough communities are so painfully conscious of their weaknesses and anxious for help that the educator need not add the burden of creating awareness unless he wants to.

If the educator's approach is strengthened by a strong belief in values of democratic participation it matters little whether the organization through which he makes entry represents the entire community. As he works with an organization that is a part of the community, and if he is successful in causing that group to broaden its base of participation, much of the community will become involved as significant broad issues are approached.

For instance, an educator may undertake a consulting relationship with a school board that is concerned with becoming more effective. By the time the board investigates the obstacles to its effectiveness it will discover that its actions affect, and are affected by, virtually all of the other subsystems in the community—certainly the school system, town government officials, parents, taxpayers, children.

Although it does not hold for routine or maintenance activities, organized action to cause social or economic change usually involves several if not all groups in the community. The interrelationship among groups that defines a community results in all groups being affected by change.

Task Definition — Who Is the Client?

Most often the first contact of the educator is with a few people or a single representative of an organization concerned with tackling a single specific problem, such as passing a bond issue, building a school or eliminating a source of pollution. Even though such problems are specific and relatively narrow in themselves they are of consequence to most parts of the community. These relatively narrow problem channels are adequate for the educator's entry to the community.

It is rare for a potential client to have a clear understanding of what problems face him. One of the functions of the educator is to help the client dig deeply enough into his concern or uneasiness to find out the underlying problem. Characteristically, the client asks for help in implementing his solution to a problem. An effective way to begin is to ask questions about the potential client's desired outcome to the point where the educator can understand, and help the client understand, what the real problem is. It usually happens that client and consultant end up agreeing that the original solution is not the only one, and perhaps is not even desirable.

Whether the initial contact between educator and client results from initiative taken by the educator or client is largely a matter of personal preference of the educator. It helps for the educator to have thought about the kinds of clients he wants to serve. He then can decide on the desirability of working with a particular client by applying predetermined criteria. Since opportunities for working in a community usually arise from some current burning issue, it is desirable for the educator to consider carefully the possible implications of developing an agreement with the representatives of the client system who approach him. If two disgruntled selectmen ask for help to get an ordinance passed at town meeting, the educator had better find out what his participation will mean to the other selectmen, to the town manager, and to opposing forces within the community.

While the educator should know what he is doing when establishing a beginning relationship with a client, who the client is and what his initial expression of problem may be are relatively unimportant and can be dealt with in the "contract negotiation" phase.

Contract Negotiation — Who Does What?

A sound base for future interaction can be established in the beginning to avoid much unnecessary stress for the educator and for the client as well. This phase of community development education is of great importance. It may be called "contract negotiation"—not an original term but one which is not commonly used to describe the setting of expectations between the community development educator and his potential client. The values, attitudes and perceptions mentioned earlier are fixed so firmly in both the educator and the client that it is only by serious effort that the educator can help develop even a general understanding of what he expects to do and what he expects from the client. Misunderstanding of the performance that is delivered on both sides is bound to result. It is important to attempt to reduce such misunderstanding to the lowest possible level.

It is easy to overlook the simple detail that an acquaintanceship must develop between educator and client. The educator has to learn something of the attitudes and values of the client to gain the perspective needed from problem-solving. The client has to learn something of the character of the educator in order to trust him. Establishing a working relationship takes time; how much time in each case is a matter of judgment, since it varies according to the personalities of both parties. Maintaining proper balance between moving rapidly into action and building a basic understanding may be difficult.

Misunderstanding can be lessened substantially if the educator insists upon defining as clearly as possible what services the client expects from the educator and what action the educator expects from the client. This helps avoid some of the problems that can arise from working with a client who is on one side of a conflict in the community. The educator can help clarify his position, that of helping the client group become more effective in proceeding toward its goals. He can emphasize that he is not willing to assume responsibility for producing the specific solution that is being requested, if such is the case. While he may agree to help a community pollution control committee become more effective in reaching its objectives, he refuses to accept responsibility for helping that committee force an industrial plant to install antipollution equipment.

It is useful to undertake contract negotiation as though a written agreement is to be prepared. Whether the contract is writ-

ten or verbal depends on the individual consultant, client and situation. In either case, it cannot be overemphasized that there must be a clear understanding of what is to be delivered, to whom, when, how, and at what, if any, cost.

It is difficult to isolate the three early phases of the educator-client relationship. The initial contact obviously comes first, but included in that is the task of building a working relationship between educator and client. Problem diagnosis, although done sketchily in the initial contact, recurs at later times. Contract negotiation, which really begins with the first expression of problem by the client, continues indefinitely.

The community development educator is essentially a consultant to the client community; that is, he is not an expert or authority who devises a plan or gives his advice and goes away, but is a helper who puts his knowledge and experience at the disposal of the client to help him solve his own problem. The consulting relationship can be effective only when it exists in a situation of mutual trust and respect. This climate can be built only through interaction between the parties who are developing trust and respect.

What Does the Client Expect of the Educator?

One of the most difficult tasks facing the community development educator is to explain what he does. The label "community development educator", used here for writing convenience, will draw nothing but blank stares if used to describe what you are. But the educator can explain what the client can expect of him. There are four key ideas that the client should understand.

These key ideas are:

1. Community development is the process by which communities get what they want.
2. Community development is group behavior that can be learned.
3. The educator works with the client organization to examine its particular process of decision-making and problem-solving and helps to look at ways of improving it.
4. There is no recipe or prescription for success.

At the time of contract negotiation the educator can make his future path easier by arriving at an agreement with the client about services to be delivered in as simple terms as possible. For instance,

this may be as simple as an arrangement for the educator to attend monthly meetings of the organization. It may be as broad as requiring the educator to work with the community organization to identify the community decision-making process, design learning experiences to improve that process, and help find resources for implementing the educational program. Typically, the educator-client contract is at a level of complexity somewhere between these extremes. A balance should be sought between defining services that are unnecessarily limiting and those subject to completely individual and possibly ambiguous interpretation.

All or some of the following are appropriate for the educator to undertake with a community client:

1. *Problem diagnosis*—helping the client clearly identify the situation to be changed.
2. *Task setting*—prescribing an educational task that seems likely to improve the client's problem-solving action while working on the stated problem. Tasks may include consulting, workshops, conferences, study courses, group discussions, etc.
3. *Educational program design*—planning in detail the task to be done; mobilizing resources such as staff, facilities and money; conducting the program; and evaluating results.

A Special Kind of Consultant

The community development educator is unique among professionals concerned with community action.

He is:

1. the only one who looks at the balance of the entire community decision-making process.
2. concerned with the structure or organization by which the community looks at problems and makes decisions.
3. concerned with the process by which the community defines problems, sets goals, examines alternatives and takes action.
4. concerned with the way the community uses all technical information available.

This concern for the entire process of community development contrasts with the approach of some behavioral scientists who are concerned only with interpersonal relationships among community members. It contrasts with the approach of many techno-

logical specialists who are concerned with presenting factual information that they see as the only requirement for solving community problems. The community development educator helps the community mature so that it can develop the interpersonal relationships required for effective problem-solving and acquire the ability to use technological information.

The community development educator does not compete with the human relations specialist or the technologist. In fact, if his efforts are successful, the services of both are in greater demand and more effectively used by the community. Community development should gain when the sensitivity trainer realizes that the presence of warm, open, sensitive, interpersonal relationships is not of itself enough to lead to effective problem-solving; and when the economist understands that his economic data and feasibility studies can not be used effectively by a community that has a defective decision-making mechanism.

The community development educator's uniqueness lies in his consulting approach. That is, he helps the community client through a process of problem-definition, goal-setting and solution-finding with no predetermined notions of what problems are to be solved or what decisions are to be made. He is concerned only that problems *are* attacked and that decisions *are* made and that action *is* taken.

What Does the Educator Need to Know About the Community?

Having made initial contact with a client and having arrived at some kind of contract for delivery of his services, what does the educator need to know in order to influence the community problem-solving process? What questions must he ask himself or others about the community? Two closely related questions need to be answered about a particular community: What is the *framework* within which decisions are made? What is the *process* by which decisions are made within the framework?

What is the framework within which decisions are made? The aim of the educator is to improve organized action to bring about change. To make improvement it is necessary to know what exists before it can be determined what changes need to be made. In any community decisions are being made. The first task of the educator is to discover the community's pattern of problem-solving. With this style of community development education it is not al-

ways necessary to distinguish between what are learning experiences and what are not. All action required to cause change through the community development process can provide a base for learning for the client and for the educator. In other words, the community client should participate with the educator in identifying and describing the pattern of problem-solving that exists.

This is a circumstance that helps further to distinguish the community development educator as a consultant from consultants in general. Another consultant may enter a client relationship, study the situation, prepare a report with or without recommendations and submit it to the client who may choose to use it or not. The consultant who is also a community development educator works *with* the client to learn what is needed, to analyze the situation and to develop a course of action. The community development educator then enters into some kind of continuing relationship, not a "one shot deal."

Where is the Action?

In defining the pattern of problem-solving in the community it is useful to trace the pattern relative to a major decision that has been made or is being made. One of the first opportunities for the educator to look at decision-making is in the section of the community that is his client. How did the client make the decision to admit the educator to the community? Did the chairman or other formal leader of the group make the decision? Did the entire group vote on acceptance of the educator? Was consensus arrived at? Did a sub-group within the organization make the decision?

In addition, some major community issue invariably can be analyzed to determine the community pattern of decision-making. A bond issue has been voted on, a new sewage treatment plant has been accepted or rejected in the community, a new school building has been approved, fluoridation of the water supply has been rejected, or some similar issue has come before the people and been acted upon. The first outlines of the decision-making pattern that are easily found are the formal organizations and institutions that participated. These can usually be discovered simply by asking a few questions of knowledgeable citizens, probably within the client group that works directly with the educator.

For example, in a water fluoridation issue it may readily be learned that the final decision was made by referendum vote. The town manager and board of selectmen influenced the decision

through preparation of the ballot and presentation of it to the electorate. The League of Women Voters may have campaigned to get citizens out to vote. The state dental association may have distributed literature in favor of fluoridation. The local newspaper may have opposed adoption of fluoridation.

Other less obvious effects are more difficult to discover and evaluate. Who are the people among low income groups in the town who influence the decisions of their friends and neighbors? How are their opinions and feelings taken into consideration in the decision-making process? How are decisions made among young people's groups in the community? They have no vote, therefore no direct influence on decisions made by referendum. Yet they are affected, may have views and may take action relative to decisions that are made.

What are the Community's Groups?

Describing the framework for problem-solving in the community is difficult since it requires identifying all of the formal and informal groups within which people interact in the community. These range from the smallest groups, such as the family or family-sized groups of individuals, up to entire systems such as the public school system. A community must identify and take into account all of these groups and their effect upon one another in achieving the highest level of effective community problem-solving. It is not necessary to begin with an exhaustive study of the community and all aspects of all its decision-making parts. In fact, it may be so discouraging to consider such a study that it would kill any possibility of action for improved community development. Nevertheless, a fairly extensive investigation of the pattern of decision-making in the community can be made, in a relatively short time and at little cost. Some hard thinking by selected citizens about who is affected by major decisions can identify most groups within the community. This can be followed by interviewing sample members of all identified groups to determine who are the influential individuals within each group. The influentials are those who influence the opinions and decisions of other members of the group. These may or may not be formal or recognized "leaders" of groups. With identification of the groups that exist in a community and of the influentials in each of those groups the framework for decision-making is fairly well defined.

Levels of Decision-Making

Another side to the nature of a decision-making pattern and how it is held together is seen in the levels of decisions that are made within various groups. The level is defined partly in terms of the numbers of people involved in making decisions.

At the individual level many decisions are made with no consultation or consideration given to others. At this level are included such decisions as what make of car I buy, what kind of clothes I wear, how much money I save, etc. Even this level of decision is influenced by others but the decision, the choice, is made by the individual alone. The sum of such individual decisions in the community does have the effect of community decisions, however. For example, while each individual chooses the brand of car he will buy, the sum of individual choices in the community determines such things as the number and kind of automobile dealers in the community.

At another level are those decisions which are individual but are shared with others. An example of this level is when the head of a household decides what make of automobile to buy, but discusses it with other members of the family, allows their opinions to be expressed, but still makes the decision. A slightly different level is the joint decision. Two individuals each have an opportunity to make a decision on the same issue and each independently, but with knowledge of the other's action, makes the same decision.

At a third level is the making of decisions in a group either by vote, consensus or other means. These three levels of decision-making can be examined on an individual or collective basis and can also be applied to the decision-making of groups. That is, all community groups may make decisions separately, group by group, with any similarity of decisions being coincidental. Or at another level, some system by which all of the groups arrive at a decision by vote, consensus or other means may exist. Part of the definition of the framework for decision-making in the community is made by identifying these patterns.

What is the Process for Community Problem-Solving?

Perhaps this is a good point to explain the terms "decision-making" and "problem-solving." In general, "problem-solving" as used in this text includes all of the action taken to relieve an unsatisfactory situation, from initial awareness of dissatisfaction

through evaluation of goal accomplishment. "Decision-making" occurs at various points throughout problem-solving whenever a choice is made between two or more alternatives. Perhaps "decision-making" could replace the term "problem-solving" by giving it both broad and specific meanings, but "problem-solving" seems to be a better phrase for the total process.

What kind of action goes on within the identified framework to arrive at community decisions? What are the procedures followed within and among the community's groups? Neither the framework nor the process of decision-making can be looked at in isolation from the other. They are interdependent; separation is useful only for analysis.

In the hope that it simplifies analysis the questions are separated into two kinds:

1. What framework is there for decision-making? (Who makes decisions? What institutions exist for decision-making? Where are decisions made? What kind of decisions are made?)
2. How are decisions made? (What action is taken in making decisions? What information is used? What relationships are there among decision-making groups and individuals?)

It is of little consequence whether the pattern or the process is looked at first, because they have to be considered together. This is also true of improvement in problem-solving performance. As the educator helps the community client examine the process and structure as they exist, new ways of improving the process become apparent. Changes in process result in changes in structure or organization.

It is helpful in analyzing a community's process (or an individual's, for that matter) to identify the elements of it. The nature of each element can then be examined, as well as the relationship of one to another and to the total process.

4 ROLE OF THE EDUCATOR

Just as social change and economic growth are complex, so is the relationship of the community development educator to the community. He assumes a variety of roles that can be confusing to himself as well as to his community client. Most of the confusion can be avoided if the educator is aware of his separate functions and their effect upon the client.

The analysis and creation of new approaches to action in community problem-solving are the heart of the educator's area of competence. Community development can be learned only while the community is in the act of problem-solving, not by studying principles and generalities in the abstract. The process of problem-solving and the learning process that the educator and the community client participate in are nearly indistinguishable. The educator himself becomes an influence within the community's problem-solving structure. This circumstance leads to confusion about the several roles taken by the educator and the effect of these upon the client system.

A Temporary Community Member

For one thing, the community development educator becomes a temporary member of the community and holds a special kind of power (that is, capability for influencing) because of it. His temporary community membership allows the educator to maintain an external quality that increases his ability to help. It is a fact of the consulting relationship that a consultant can more easily and effectively help an organization of which he is not a regular member.

The consultant is relatively ineffective within his own organization because he is hampered by the same vested interests, anxieties, and convictions as other members of the organization. His "external membership" in a community client organization allows the educator to be perceived and accepted as one who does not try to influence the community toward a specific course of action and is able to concentrate his attention on the process by which problems are solved. However, as stated earlier, the community development educator is not without vested interests or personal opinions. It is important for him to recognize the times when he is imposing himself and his own views and biases upon the client.

The community development educator is a temporary community member with an external quality; that is, he is an element within the system, influences the system, and is influenced by it.

Consultant

Another role of the educator is that of consultant or counselor. As noted, the ability to operate effectively as a consultant is enhanced by his external temporary kind of membership in the system. Acting as a consultant, the educator encourages the client, whether an individual member of the client system or a group of client members, to deal more effectively with their own problems. He helps them as far as possible to examine all aspects of a problem and to undertake a sound problem-solving approach.

In doing so his function can be described as diagnosis, intervention and feedback. The educator analyzes the community development process as the community moves through it, intervenes with observations about what is happening and with suggestions for facilitating the process, gives and receives feedback of the effect of adjustments that are made.

In this role the educator has no professional concern with the particular solution selected for a problem. He is concerned only with causing the client to examine his own problem carefully and to arrive at his own solution. As a consultant the educator is concerned only with the means by which a decision is reached and that effective action is taken. He does not come to the community with recommendations for the community to follow for its salvation.

On a personal level, however, it is likely that the educator does have an interest in what decision is made. He may not need to conceal his feeling about favoring a particular decision, but he should be careful to avoid influencing the adoption of his preferred

decision. This is hard to do. In a community that is considering installation of a new water system the educator's job is to help the community consider all aspects of the problem and find ways for all people who will be affected by the decision to have an opportunity to influence it. His personal opinion may be that the water system under consideration is not the best choice for the community. He should suppress his personal opinion and try to avoid influencing people against the water system.

The educator can improve his effectiveness as a consultant by selecting clients whose goals are in accord with his own. He will and should avoid clients whose purpose conflicts with his values or who are sponsoring action he strongly opposes.

Process Technician

Another side to the community development educator is that of a process technician. He has knowledge and skills related to the process by which an organization takes effective action. He is a skilled observer of group behavior. He brings to the client a technology of organized action for social change. He has expertise in applying the educational process to content.

As a *consultant* the educator may help a community client recognize a need for information about methods of land use control and as a *process technician* suggest a panel discussion by experts. As *consultant* he sees among members of a planning board lack of understanding of the board's purpose and as *technician* designs a workshop to help members define the purpose. As a *consultant* he observes tension between factions in the client group that is too intense to confront directly and as *technician* arranges a case study or simulation exercise to approach the problem more safely.

While the community development educator must use his consulting skills to help the client group identify what it needs to learn, he must supply the knowledge of how the learning can be effected. The consultant and process technician roles are complementary and need not be confusing as long as the educator is aware of the difference between them.

A community development educator may be not only a consultant and a process technician in group effectiveness but also a technician in some other field. For instance, he may come from a background of landscape architecture. His technical competence in that field may be useful in a physical planning project in the

community. Or he may have been a chemical engineer and finds that his expertise is useful in pollution control programs. Confusion arising from this kind of technological competence can be controlled by keeping the two areas of competence clearly separated. Confusion may be avoided completely by the educator using his other technical ability only in activities where he is not a community development consultant.

Facilitator

Some functions performed by the community development educator seem necessary or helpful to improve community development, yet are not integral to the other roles that have been discussed. Perhaps these can be described as facilitating functions.

Because he has that peculiar external-temporary membership the educator may be able to initiate action that no one else can. It is not unusual for joint effort by several community groups to be impossible because the motives of any one group that suggests action are suspect. The educator may be the neutral party who can arrange a beginning. But he may also provide a convenient scapegoat, so this function should be undertaken with caution.

When the community client and the educator decide that they want a specific learning experience, resources outside the community often are needed. Whether staging a problem census, a workshop on pollution control techniques, staff training for welfare workers, or a leadership conference for a service club, additional people or money or both may be needed. The community development educator is likely to be in a better position to know where to find such resources than community members and may help to obtain them. Here again is a point of caution. The community may willingly leave the educator with full responsibility for financing and staffing.

Keeping Roles Clear

One problem that nearly always arises for the community development educator is not from a role he assumes but from the community client perceiving him as an authority. Early in the relationship between educator and community client the latter usually expects the community development educator to act in the traditional manner of experts. The client is inclined to make insistent demands upon the educator for answers, recommendations, pro-

nouncements and plans. Even after the educator's behavior establishes his role as different from the expert or authority this perception may persist among some members of the client group. One effective way to dispel this authority image is for the educator to help the clients become acquainted with him as a person.

Perhaps there are other ways to analyze the multiple roles of the educator with the community client. But the main point is that the educator does have multiple roles that may confuse the client and perhaps the educator. Realizing this probability and watching for signs of it can limit undesirable effects.

5 THE PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS

Now let us look in detail at the problem-solving process that is the focus of the community development educator's effort. A supporting circumstance for the educator is that a community seldom has a procedure for examining the process by which problems are attacked, or even awareness of the possibility that it should be examined. Therefore, if the educator can induce the client to think deliberately about the process by which decisions are made he is making progress. This requires no great refinement of community development skill. If he can also provide a system for examining the community's problem-solving activity, he performs a valuable service.

Models of Problem-Solving

The problem-solving process has been analyzed in many different yet essentially similar ways. The following analysis is offered not as the best and certainly not as the only means of analyzing the kinds of action undertaken in problem-solving. It is simply one that has worked well for the author.

Problems arise in every community and action is taken to cope with them. Some decisions are made by default when the action taken consists of doing nothing, but problems are coped with in some fashion. Ignoring them is one way. The community development educator aims to help the community deliberately improve the manner in which it deals with problems and makes decisions. To be effective he must have some tool for analyzing the process of community problem-solving and for taking steps to improve it.

Planning may consist only of stating intentions or hopes which may be acted upon. Problem-solving includes not only the expression of what is intended but what is actually done. At least 18 models of problem-solving analysis have been conceived and used in a variety of contexts. These are not conflicting models but they vary in the labels applied to different elements in the problem-solving process and in the number of subdivisions of each of the elements. Most have been developed for and applied to the improvement of decision-making or problem-solving in industrial organizations. Few appear to have arisen from study of the total community's problem-solving processes and related needs for analysis. Much of the variation in models apparently comes from specialized needs or interests in some classification of organization, such as military or corporate management.

Common Elements

The labels and descriptions applied to problem-solving elements are of little consequence as long as they are identified in such a way that action in a community can be examined and evaluated. The major categories of action common to most problem-solving models are problem definition, goal-setting, and solution-finding or alternative selection. Although each of these types of activity can be further subdivided into related activities, these are most readily distinguishable.

One difficulty encountered in analyzing and categorizing problem-solving elements is that description of the elements implies a step-by-step procedure. This is misleading. While an orderliness or sequence of action in problem-solving is important, the specific sequence of the elements is primarily a function of individual problem-solving style. In other words, any problem-solving process includes problem definition, goal-setting and solution-finding but not necessarily in that order or in equal proportions of time spent, or exclusive of one another. Problem definition and goal-setting may be concurrent activities. Solution-finding may be so emphasized in a particular group that it is extremely difficult even to identify problem definition or goal-setting.

Description Harder Than Application

The analysis of problem-solving is not as difficult in practice as it appears to be in print. Description of the problem-solving process is hazardous because the limitations of written language enlarge the opportunity for misinterpreting the concept. The number

and size of community groups involved in many problem-solving situations may lead one to wonder that any action ever results. It is apparent that deliberate thought about a systematic approach to problem-solving is likely to result in improvement over the usual intuitive, random approach. The very concern of individuals in the community that leads them to act on a problem prevents their being attentive to the process by which action is undertaken. This is the basis for the community development educator to perform a valuable service, namely to provide the community with a consciousness of the manner in which it deals with problems.

Problem Definition

What is the initial statement of the group about the situation that it wants to change? The cliche, "Once the problem is clearly defined the solution is virtually accomplished," is largely true. The clarification and accurate definition of a problem may require more time and effort than setting goals or planning a course of action. Community problems by their nature tend to be complex and require much background information to identify them clearly. Frequently the problem is defined only by implication. When asked for a definition of the problem the client may respond with a description of the solution that he wants to implement.

An important tool of the community development educator is the question "why?" One community in a typical problem statement expressed it as the need to pass a zoning ordinance. *Why*? To prevent the building of trailer parks and honkytonk types of food and entertainment enterprises. *Why* was that going to be a problem? Because a new government-subsidized power plant was to be built in the community and an exit from the interstate highway was to be established at the edge of town. These would lead to an influx of outsiders into the community along with sudden growth of all sorts of unplanned and undesirable developments. *Why* was this a problem? The local community would be overwhelmed by forces outside its control and would lose many of the community's attractive features.

The basic problem turned out to be that the community wanted to control the effects of the change and thus be able to preserve desirable features of the community. This turns out to be quite a different problem from that originally expressed which was really a solution and not a problem. It is common for an initial problem statement to be a solution to an implied problem. Failure

to probe for the real problem can lead to wasted effort to get results which have little or no effect on the situation that the client hoped to change.

It is difficult to define the point at which a problem statement can be accepted as a "real" problem. Within a group it seems to be at the point when further asking of the question "why?" can no longer be answered by a group statement, but leads to definition in terms of individual concerns of group members. For an individual the point seems to be reached when the question "why?" can be answered only in terms of the individual's values and attitudes.

Related to problem definition is the question: "Whose problem is it?" The community development educator can explore this first with the client system with whom he is working. He can ask whether this problem is shared by all members of the direct client system—perhaps a planning commission or a development group. Then he still needs to cause the client system to find out who within the community shares this problem.

It is important to observe who perceives the problem, and who perceives the problem as belonging to someone else. Adequate community problem-solving—including *action* on the problem—requires widespread support and participation in the community. This implies that the problem as defined must be one that is felt widely within the community. It is relatively easy for a person to analyze and define problems that he believes other people have. It is something else to identify with people those situations about which they are willing to take action. Problems are seldom well understood from simple statements of them unless there has been widespread participation in the community in arriving at the definition.

The looseness of language is a major obstacle to adequate problem statement. Words often are so indefinite in meaning that any collection of phrases can be interpreted differently. The level of understanding of a problem statement can be tested by devising ways for people to feed back their interpretation of its meaning. A clue to inadequate testing of the community's understanding of a problem is found when some leader says, "Of course the problem is understood, it is stated clearly in black and white!" Many communications snarls start when someone is trapped by the fallacy that the written word is exact. Clearly defining a problem is indi-

spensable to its successful solution, yet it is often neglected because it may be time-consuming and is usually difficult.

Problem definition answers the questions: What is the problem? Who has the problem? Why is it a problem? The quality of problem definition is measured by how well these questions are answered.

Goal Setting

Problem definition is the action that produces a statement of the situation to be changed. Goal-setting is the action that leads to a statement of the desired new situation. The goal statement is the community's answer to the question, "What do we want to do?" or, "What are we trying to do?" or, "Under what circumstances will we be satisfied with the change that has taken place?" Goal-setting is interdependent with problem definition. As mentioned earlier, goal-setting frequently takes place with little or no problem definition. This may, and often does, result in much effort toward achieving a goal that is unrelated to the real problem.

A lack of clear problem definition nearly always results in floundering and difficulty in setting goals. This is because the implied problem is ambiguous. It is troublesome to reach agreement about a goal when no common understanding exists of what problem it is related to.

The discovery may be made that the problem has not been solved even though the stated result has been achieved. In such cases the goal is not valid for the problem. This often occurs when it is expressed as a particular solution to the problem. It also arises from assumptions about cause and effect. A goal has validity when it clearly is related directly to the solution of a problem. A personal experience illustrates a goal that was not valid for the problem: professionals complained of non-compliance with rules by voluntary leaders. The professionals insisted that a leader's guidebook setting forth the rules would solve the problem. The guidebook was prepared and distributed. Little effect was ever noted.

Even when a problem is clearly defined, goal-setting is not always easy. People tend to set objectives so loosely that the end point can not be recognized when it is reached. Broad goals are interpreted differently with the result that effort is diffused and satisfaction is limited. It seems unreasonable for communities to implement programs without a clear understanding of what they are trying to do, yet it happens frequently.

It should be possible to state a goal so that it can be measured. A community must know what it is trying to do if it is to know when it has been done. A broad goal such as "to reduce poverty" is of limited value unless the conditions are stated that will exist when poverty is reduced: no families with income of less than $—— per year; or not over——per cent of families with less than $—— income; or every individual in the community to have an adequate diet (defined) and sufficient clothes, heat and shelter (defined).

Another tendency is to set goals by defining not only the end point but also the methods for getting there. A community group may set out "to control building development by enacting a zoning code." The statement of a goal may be loaded with qualifying words that confuse the meaning: "to preserve the rightful heritage of honest citizens of this community by enacting a just and equitable zoning code to prevent the unchecked blight of honkytonk business establishments."

The number of available alternatives and the chances for dealing effectively with the problem are limited when a stated goal is hard to measure, specifies a course of action, and is cluttered with side issues.

Solution-Finding

Solution-finding refers to all activity that goes into exploring alternative courses of action toward reaching the established goal. It includes discovering alternatives; consideration of predicted consequences, of practicality or desirability, of resources required and available for implementation; and selection and implementation of a single alternative.

Solution-finding is the phase of problem-solving that is referred to as "taking action." Perhaps this is understandable in view of the too frequent neglect of problem definition and goal-setting. Anyway, it usually is possible to achieve a goal by more than one course of action. A decision is made on how to proceed, sometimes by starting in the first direction recognized, maybe after careful investigation and weighing of several alternatives.

Most community change projects are complex enough to require a plan of action. The plan may be vague and implicit or specific and detailed. Responsibilities of individuals for action may be distinctly identified and coordinated or not. The individuals who carry out the plan of action may be different from those who

defined the problem and set the goal, another reason why problem and goal should be well stated.

Each of the three major elements of action (problem definition, goal-setting, solution-finding) present in problem-solving activity can be subdivided into tasks that are performed in that particular kind of action. For example, one sub-task is fact-finding or data collection. This sub-task may be found in each of the three elements of problem-solving. In problem definition, certain information is required to understand what the problem is, who has it, how it is perceived and what circumstances surround it. In goal-setting, fact-finding may take the form of gathering information to determine the cause and effect relationship between problem and goal. Fnally, in alternative selection much information is usually needed to discover alternatives and their consequences.

This is the community problem-solving process that the educator attempts to influence. He finds it in operation in whatever community he enters. His interest is in improving the process so the community can be more effective in causing change. The next chapter discusses diagnosis and evaluation of the process.

6 DIAGNOSIS AND EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

An important function of the community development educator is to help the client system observe and describe the way it performs each of the elements of problem-solving. To improve the process it is necessary not only to observe and describe the process at it exists in the group, but also to evaluate it. Evaluation involves judging not only the quality of problem definition, of goal-setting, and of solution-finding, but also the balance among them.

Evaluation is an important part of the community development educator's job in two ways. In the first place he must appraise the community's existing level of performance in problem-solving as a basis for improving its effectiveness. Second, he must measure the community's problem-solving activity at least twice to find out whether any change takes place. Whether the educator's appraisal of the quality of community development is diagnosis or evaluation is likely to depend upon the use that he makes of it and perhaps the degree of formality and detail. Since evaluation is done with the community client it is also part of the learning process.

Five Dimensions of Problem-Solving

Evaluation is based on five dimensions that are present in problem-solving: the problem, the problem solver, the process (the elements discussed in Chapter IV), the environment, and the solution.

The nature of the problem itself affects the other four dimensions. It influences the problem solver's view of the problem, the difficulty with which it is defined, the nature of goals that emerge from the defined problem, the number and kind of alternatives that exist.

The problem solver, in this case the community, influences the way in which the problem is worked upon by the sum of intellectual capacity, experience and character of the members of the community. All of the personal variables—attitudes, values and perceptions—determine behavior of the community in the problem-solving process and the eventual solution.

The problem-solving environment includes psychological, sociological, physical and time factors. Problem-solving goes on about a specific problem, by a specific problem-solving group, within a specific environment or situation, through a defined process from which a solution emerges. The situation affects each of the other dimensions. What is a problem for Chicago is not one for Prospect, Maine, nor would the same group or procedure be appropriate.

The solution is a product of the mix. The degree to which it is accomplished is one measure of the effectiveness of problem-solving.

What to Evaluate?

How do you judge community development? Here is the point where community development injects values into the social action, decision-making, problem-solving, organization, process that has been discussed. Recall that the definition of community development being used here is based on democratic values: organized action of groups of people to bring about social and economic change. So, evaluation must take into account both the means and the end. It is not the presence or absence of a process resulting in change that is measured but the degree to which criteria are met, such as the following.

An Ideal

What are the characteristics of effective community development? Perhaps the following roughly describes an ideal situation:

1. All the people who are influenced by change participate in making it. (What is an appropriate type and level of participation for each group of community members is not clear).
2. A system provides for communication among all groups in the community, including open discussion of issues, feelings and opinions.

3. Groups within the community exhibit maturity in cooperative action on social issues.
4. Problems are clearly defined and are basic problems, not just fragments or symptoms.
5. Goals are clearly stated in terms that can be measured and will reduce the problems to which they relate.
6. Alternatives are weighed and the most desirable is chosen deliberately before a course of action is taken.
7. The actual outcome is the same as the stated goal.
8. The community has an internal consciousness of its processes and has no need for a community development educator!

Measuring Against the Ideal

Community development educators are badly in need of a systematic means of rating a community. Lacking a system they measure the community against an intuitive ideal. In the following section are some questions that may help make the intuition a little more systematic.

The answers to these questions should provide a description of the quality of community development applied to a specific change project in a given community. Rating the community development quality at different times in that community should provide some indication of change in quality. However, it is of little or no value for comparing one community with another.

The questions are for use by the evaluator in finding information that can be used to evaluate community development. They are not to be asked of individuals as a survey. They may be considered as criteria which collectively provide a basis for evaluation of community development.

Each major question is followed by several second-order questions that lead to answering it. These in turn could be expanded to a third level of questions. Although doing so might further reduce the subjectiveness of evaluation, it seems unnecessary to provide such detail for the practicing community development educator.

Questions for Evaluating Community Development

1. How well is a problem defined?
   a. How specifically is a problem stated?
   b. How free from assumptions is a problem stated?

c. How objectively is a problem stated?
d. How well is a problem substantiated by data?
e. How well do those who defined a problem represent those who feel it?

2. How well is a goal stated?
   a. How directly is a goal related to a stated problem?
   b. How much freedom for alternative selection does a stated goal permit?
   c. How specifically is a goal stated?
   d. How measurable is a goal?
   e. How objectively is a goal stated?
3. How broad is participation by the community?
   a. How well do people understand issues?
   b. How well do they understand goals?
   c. How well do they understand action alternatives and their consequences?
   d. How much influence do the people affected by a decision have on making it?
   e. How well are opinions and feelings of individuals reflected in decisions?
4. How mature is a community's problem-solving system?
   a. How well are functions and goals understood?
   b. How efficiently does it progress toward its goals?
   c. What is the degree of communication among members?
   d. How effectively does it apply problem-solving?
   e. How well balanced are established working procedures and willingness to change?
   f. How aware is it of its own functioning procedures?
   g. How well balanced are organizational unity and individuality?
   h. How well are leadership responsibilities shared?
   i. How free is expression of all feelings and points of view?
   j. How well balanced is influence of emotion and rationality?
   k. What is the level of trust and respect?
5. How well is action planned?
   a. How well are alternatives and their consequences considered?
   b. How clearly is the intended outcome stated?

c. How well are methods or steps defined?
d. How clear is assignment of responsibility?
e. How well does actual outcome match a stated goal?

This approach to evaluating community development needs further refinement and testing. At least as it stands it can be useful as a guide for the educator in diagnosing a community development situation. A case study can be compiled by answering the questions in a narrative form.

A research statistician should undertake the work needed to build a valid evaluation from this raw material. Answers to most of the questions as they are stated could be rated on a numerical scale. For instance, "How specifically is a problem stated?" could be answered by rating on a scale of 1 to 5, ranging from very vague to very specific. Such a numerical rating would give an appearance of objectivity that might be misleading.

Evaluation is done with the intent to improve community development. Community development can be improved because it is group behavior that can be learned. As it is analyzed and evaluated predictable patterns or tendencies to weak performance are found. The five major questions for evaluation suggest the main trouble spots. Some of the common symptoms of inadequacy in these areas are worth mentioning.

Problem Definition

Problem definition tends to be neglected or omitted entirely except by implication. It is assumed that the problem is so evident that it is known by everyone.

Expression of a problem is often in the form of a proposed solution, "We need a manual of community development education." It is likely to be a fragment of some larger problem. It may be fuzzy and vague with no definition of who has the problem, what is the nature of it, why it is a problem.

Many people seem to have an aversion to taking the time necessary to determine exactly what the situation is that they want to change. Perhaps their reluctance arises from the attitude that having a problem is somehow a sign of weakness; it is better to be taking visible action even though no one knows just what he is trying to do!

Helping his client define problems clearly takes much of the educator's effort. It has an important effect upon all other aspects of community development.

Goal-Setting

A goal should be stated in terms of results or conditions that would exist when a problem is dealt with satisfactorily. It often departs widely from that by rationalizing action to be taken, stating a method or procedure to be used, or being so vague as to be meaningless.

Perhaps the most common weakness of a goal is that no one can tell when it is reached. Unlike a community fund drive, where the goal is to raise a specific dollar amount in a specific time, most social change goals are not absolute. Change occurs along a range of possibility, so a goal statement should specify what evidence of change is acceptable. Not many communities have such clear-cut goals.

Another common weakness found in goals is that their relation to a problem is assumed. It is not always possible for a goal to be free from assumptions but they should be recognized and tested as in the following example: A community recognizes a problem of juvenile delinquency. A goal is set to establish a recreation center. It rests on assumptions that the existence of a recreation center will reduce delinquency, that delinquency in that community is related to lack of recreation facilities, that the center will be used after it is established, etc. The assumptions *may* be correct but they should be analyzed critically for relevance.

Neglect of problem definition and goal-setting is evident in a strong tendency to jump into a solution immediately. It is the inclination of individuals and groups alike to go into action on a proffered solution with only implied problem and goal. Only by maintaining awareness of problem-solving procedures can this tendency be overcome.

Participation

The common trouble with participation is that there is so little of it. A small group in the community, often the formal leaders, decide on a problem that the community has, set a goal that will correct it, decide on a course of action, and then are puzzled and exasperated when the community fails to support them. Examples of this abound in programs of urban renewal, pollution control, poverty reduction and social control.

Too many problems are stated by an individual or group for someone else. Welfare agency staffs define the problems of the

poor, business executives define the problems of customers, students define the problems of university administrators, and each has a prescription for the other's salvation. No one can fully understand a problem except the individuals who have it, although they may need help in defining it.

Organizational Maturity

The ease and effectiveness of communication within and among all groups in the community are the major marks of maturity in organizational behavior. A group can go through a process of growth toward maturity similar to the process of growth and maturation of an individual. Some indicators of maturity in a group or organization of several groups are found under the evaluation question, "How mature is a community's problem-solving system?"

One good indicator of maturity is in the amount of communication among the organization's members, the degree of listening, testing for understanding of statements, feedback. Inattention is a common weakness.

The community development educator can observe listening at two levels. One is within his client group. The most glaring sign of poor listening is when several persons talk at once. This can be standard behavior in some groups; when it is, listening is obviously less than thorough. Failure to hear or to comprehend what others are saying is often apparent in unrelated responses.

Another level for observation of listening is between the client group and other groups in the community. How much active effort do the community leaders or the participants in a community action project make to discover the true opinions, feelings and attitudes of all affected groups in the community? Until fairly effective listening is accomplished it is unlikely that other signs of organizational maturity will be found.

Planning Action

Once a course of action is decided upon, a community is more likely to do an adequate job of planning than in other phases of problem-solving. Nevertheless good action planning is by no means so universal that this element should be overlooked. The prior step of exploring alternatives especially may be slighted. Rarely does only one action alternative exist for reaching a goal. Creative, open-minded investigation of possibilities and predicted consequences is too seldom done.

An opposite fault to solution-jumping and failure to consider alternatives is over-collection of data. Planning groups particularly may expend time, energy and money in exhaustive resource inventories or situation studies that may not be needed or used. This is most likely to occur when planning is done *for* people who have problems rather than *with* them.

It is fitting to end this section with a reminder to look at the outcome of community development as a critical piece of evidence. Careful attention to organization, procedures and interrelationships is important because the means by which problems are solved are of vital concern to the community. But the means are toward an end, so whether the end is achieved is also important. Did the problem definition, goal-setting, broad participation, cooperative organization and plan of action *result in the desired change*?

7 GROWTH OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EDUCATOR

Why A Community Development Educator?

What attracts an individual to community development education as a vocation? Perhaps the most important cause is a disposition toward working with people and their problems in contrast to a disposition toward working with things and facts or the objects of people's concern. If attitudes about occupations were laid out on a scale, the community development educator would fall toward the "people" end.

Community development education can be a source of satisfaction through the development and expansion of others' performance. Influencing the growth of people can contribute significantly to the educator's feeling that he is doing productive, important and appreciated work. As he works in the community he can recognize that his influence has speeded, eased or made possible the process by which the community does what it wants to do.

One final note about the attraction of community development education is that currently the demand for services of the kind provided by the educator far exceed the supply. Awareness seems to be growing across the country that many aspirations of people can be met only through new ways of organizing action for social and economic change. No clear source of help to achieve organized action is apparent, and communities tend to be willing to try any approach that seems reasonable. Although no single label describes him, the person with the characteristics of the community development educator is sought by many public and private employers.

An individual's particular combination of personality and experience brings him to community development education. One situation that may lead to exploring the consulting route to educa-

tion is discovery that telling, persuading or ordering are not especially effective ways of causing behavior change. This writer's curiosity about better ways of helping people solve problems began in his county agricultural agent days. It grew from wondering why farmers would repeatedly show understanding of the advantages of adopting some agricultural practice that would make them more money, save expenses, or make work easier and yet would not adopt the practice. Pursuing this curiosity led to a deeper interest in how people cope with their problems than with the solutions that they adopt.

Some evidence indicates that even if increased adoption of specific practices is the objective, the type of community development described here is more effective than other approaches. A study by the Allahabad Agricultural Institute in India of 428 villages showed that the community development approach resulted in significantly greater change of agricultural practices than three other approaches: agricultural extension, adult literacy, and social welfare.

Areas of Competence

However the community development educator becomes involved in the practice of community development education, his proficiency is rooted in a knowledge and understanding of social systems, a capability in consulting, and the flexibility to apply these to any problem situations in client systems. It is the blending of these three areas of competence that determines the individual's effective performance.

The community development educator needs:

- to know the forms and patterns of social behavior.
- to know the kinds of groups that exist within a community from the family to the corporation structure to the municipal government.
- to be able to recognize patterns of organization within a social group whether it is a service club or a school system.
- to recognize the forces within individuals and groups that shape individual behavior.
- to understand the interrelationships among all the groups in a community and of groups within the community to groups outside—the relationship of business and industry in a community to town government and

of both to state agencies, federal government and national organizations.

- to understand the dynamics of change within a variety of social systems.

It is of no importance to the community development educator to be able to give a textbook definition of sociometry, but to understand how the decisions made by an individual are influenced is important. His effectiveness is enhanced directly as he increases his understanding of social systems that operate in communities.

His knowledge and understanding of social systems makes it possible for him to function. The knowledge defines the territory within which he operates and familiarizes him with it. What he does in that territory is consulting. Consulting, helping others to do more effective problem-solving, involves an open-ended set of skills that can be acquired and continually improved.

Acquiring competence does not in itself make a community development educator. Knowledge of social systems and skill in consulting might be applied in other occupations. The additional quality that produces a community development educator is flexibility in applying these skills and knowledge to existing problems in communities. The element of flexible application is hard to define and isolate but it is what makes the community development educator able to influence the change process in such diverse communities as: a planning commission attempting to serve the needs of a metropolitan area, a consortium of universities attempting to increase their public-service educational programs, a corporation with a desire to develop an in-service training program for employees, and a multi-agency group attempting to use federal funds to stimulate economic growth in a region.

This flexibility of application is related to creativity and to awareness of current events. It arises from knowledge of what is going on in the society where the educator operates, and it has to do with his character. It is related to his being observant of surroundings and reactions and to his sincerity in helping the community do what it wants to do. The list begins to sound as though it is personality that glues the parts into the whole. Perhaps it is.

Another kind of competence is more definite; the educator must demonstrate the behavior that he is trying to teach. He cannot be effective in influencing clients to get broad participation, to do deliberate problem-solving, to evaluate progress, and to use democratic methods if he himself makes decisions alone, leaves

problems fuzzy, jumps to solutions and behaves in an authoritarian manner.

Where Is It Found?

The would-be community development educator often asks, "Where can I go to learn how to do community development?" The answer is, "Go find a client and start consulting."

Community development is group behavior that can be learned. It can be learned only while the learners work on a real problem in a community while being aware of the process by which they attack it. The same is true of community development education. It can only be learned while the educator works with a community client. The learning comes from examination of his action and its results. The practice of community development education can be carried on without learning (although probably not for long) but learning cannot be done without the practice.

Ambiguous as it may sound, learning community development education is not easy but it is simple. Having recently taken up the game of golf the author sees a direct analogy in that game. It is simple to understand the objective and the method; just swing a club to hit the ball as far and as accurately as possible toward the hole. It is not easy to accomplish. Like the golfer, the community development educator must continually search for more effective ways of taking action while constantly checking the effects of his behavior.

The point is that community development education is not a discipline or a recognized course of study, although some universities are beginning to offer degrees labeled "community development". This fluid quality of community development may not be entirely regrettable. For one thing it helps to reduce a tendency we all share, of developing a specialized jargon. Specialization breeds glossaries of terms that have particular meaning to the specialist and are useful as shortcuts to communication within a discipline but are meaningless to or misinterpreted by outsiders. Since the community development educator works with citizens who have no particular interest in the theoretical analysis of organized action, the use of a professional jargon is especially undesirable. It requires a deliberate effort to purge one's vocabulary periodically.

Perhaps it is also fortunate that community development has not become a discipline, since the educator must have a sweeping

perspective that may not be compatible with a specializing influence such as a discipline imposes. The community development educator needs tolerance and respect for the points of view of others—economists, sociologists, psychologists, public administrators, educators, —that is difficult to acquire.

Just because community development education must be learned through practice, and no single course of study prepares one for the practice, it should not be inferred that growth of an individual as a community development educator must be left to chance. A person can set out on a deliberate course of education that contributes to his effectiveness. The individual must tailor a course of study to suit his needs. Each community development educator builds his abilities and proficiency from his own knowledge and experiences and integrates these in a different way. Even though community development education must be learned by practicing it, supportive learning of many kinds can be found. This paper cannot result in learning of itself, even if it were to be memorized, but it is intended to set guidelines for learning.

Perhaps of more importance the text may encourage the learner through suggesting that he need not spend a lifetime in a formal discipline to become a community development educator, but can start today. Three sources provide opportunities for supportive learning to the community development educator: formal education, informal or continuing education and reading. One can find knowledge, concepts and techniques that are applicable to community development education from university and college courses in sociology, psychology, social psychology, anthropology, education. They can be selected from the fields of communication, personnel management, organization development, public administration and management.

Less formal sources of education are to be found in workshops, laboratories, conferences and seminars in management development, human relations, problem-solving and creativity. Reading can be especially productive. Books from many of the fields listed above include extensive bibliographies from which random selections can be made, leading to further literary exploration. Examples of the educational opportunities from which the community development educator can learn have been avoided because of the difficulty of identifying examples that would have meaning for more than a few readers.

The prime requisite for the education of the community development educator seems to be an appetite for knowledge and for reading. An exceptionally broad interest in almost everything is desirable, if not necessary. Whatever knowledge or experience the educator has can be useful. The breadth of experience and knowledge of the educator is the significant element, not the specific nature of his education.

Related Concepts

Scattered among the social sciences are found three key concepts that are particularly useful to the community development educator: counseling, problem-solving, and group dynamics. These concepts may be well disguised, and it is usually necessary to penetrate a mass of verbiage before uncovering the basic ideas that can be put to use in the community development arena.

Counseling is the primary function of the community development educator and the *principles* are the same wherever the function may be performed. These principles, however, are invariably couched in the language of a special perspective or field of interest. The same principles of counseling are to be found in courses and literature designed for school guidance counselors, or for rehabilitation counselors, or for psychotherapists. A special effort must be made to isolate the basic principles of counseling from the special viewpoint surrounding them.

Principles of problem-solving are found in even wider fields. They may be found in counseling education programs and literature, but also in the broader field of education, logic, industrial management and public administration. Probably industrial or business management is the most prolific field because business and industry have been willing to spend large amounts of money on research to find more effective ways to solve problems and make decisions.

As is the case with counseling and problem-solving, sources of learning about group dynamics are widely scattered. Scanning a few college catalogs reveals courses in group dynamics, group leadership and group discussion in such diverse departments as speech, education, sociology, psychology, public administration, political science, business and economics and philosophy. Since his work is done mainly in group situations, the community development educator obviously must be a serious student of the forces at work within groups and of the way in which these forces affect individual's behavior within groups. He should be cautious, however,

in labeling his interest or study as "group dynamics." Unfortunately the term has acquired a negative connotation for some people. For some the term "group dynamics" is a label for unpleasant experiences they have had with sensitivity training, laissez-faire leadership, and democratic group discussion. It may be unproductive to attempt to correct these stereotypes of group dynamics through rational explanation that the term simply describes the forces that affect action in groups. Like the weather, group dynamics exist and may be predicted for useful reasons or just grumbled about.

And So —

A style of community development has been presented that is distinguished by the following characteristics:

1. Community development is organized action of groups of people to bring about social and economic change.
2. Community development is group behavior that can be learned.
3. The elements of community development can be analyzed as a problem-solving process which can be defined and evaluated as a basis for learning.
4. The community development educator functions as a consultant in the community client system with no predetermined course of action except to help the community do what it wants to do.